

BUTLER ROBERT

NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE
AND TRAVELS OF
SERJEANT B-

Robert Butler

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ADVERTISEMENT

In justice to the unpretending Author of this volume, it is necessary to notice that the idea of publishing it in no respect originated with himself. The circumstances which led to its appearance may be very briefly stated.

On the Serjeant's arrival in this country from India, he found himself surrounded by an extensive circle of relations, to which the excellence of his own character soon added many personal friends. As might be expected, the occurrences of his past life and travels, frequently formed the topics of conversation at their occasional meetings; and as he had from an early period, for his own amusement and edification, been in the habit of keeping an exact journal of all "the providences that befel him," he frequently had recourse to it for the purpose of aiding his recollection, and exhibiting more vividly the state of his feelings at various periods, and under the various incidents of his life. Many passages of the Journal excited a very pleasing and deep interest in those to whom they were communicated, and the desire of perusing it gradually extended itself to persons in a higher condition of life. A clergyman particularly, under whose pastoral care he was for some time placed, was so much struck with the interesting, as well as the instructive character of these "simple annals," that he urged the Author, in a very kind but pressing manner, to collect the more material passages in the original Journal into something like a continued narrative; and to transcribe them in a connected and legible form, for the private enjoyment of his particular friends. Our Author, to whom nothing is more agreeable than to have his mind or hands usefully occupied, undertook the task, and executed it with a degree of neatness, which would have done great credit to a more practised scribe. The manuscript volume was, of course, in very great request in his own neighbourhood, and was perused by none without peculiar pleasure; but, for several years, no idea of printing it presented itself to his own mind, though it was frequently suggested by those who had been permitted to read it. It lately fell into the hands of the writer of this notice, whose feelings in perusing it certainly were those of extreme delight; and finding that one or two friends, in whose judgment he placed the highest confidence, coincided with him in opinion, he strongly recommended to the Author that it should be published. His reluctance to this public appearance, was only overcome through the influence of a suggestion rising up in his own mind, that the work might not only perhaps afford pleasure and instruction, but that, should any profits arise from the sale, he would be enabled thereby to gratify his feelings, by devoting them to the support of Bible and Missionary Societies, or other pious purposes.

The task of the Editor, while the sheets were passing through the press, has been of a very limited kind, being chiefly confined to the correction of a few *glaring* errors in grammar or style, which the writer's very imperfect education necessarily occasioned. Though the most perfect liberty was conceded to him, the Editor felt no disposition to make any changes affecting that extreme naïveté and simplicity of style which appeared to form at least one peculiar and novel charm in the original narrative.

The Editor abstains from any attempt to characterize the volume, as he feels that, from peculiar circumstances, he has become too much enamoured of the Author and his performance, to possess the requisite coolness for doing the work strict justice. He now sends it into the world, humbly trusting that the same kind Providence that watched over the Author, amid manifold perils, temptations, and afflictions, will furnish him with fresh motives of gratitude, by rendering these his humble labours useful for promoting the glory of God, as well as profitable and acceptable to his "dear readers" — objects more precious, the Editor firmly believes, to *his* soul, "than thousands of gold and silver."

Edinburgh,
April 17, 1823.

CHAPTER I

I was born of poor but respectable parents, in the town of Peebles, county of Tweeddale, upon the 3d day of April, 1784. Under their nursing care I remained until I was four years of age, when I was sent to my grandfather in Darnick, from whom I received any little education I ever got. Being then too young for school, my grandmother was very attentive in giving me instruction as I was able to bear it; and before I was five years of age, when I was sent to school, I could repeat various psalms, hymns, and passages of Scripture. She employed herself frequently in spinning on the lint wheel, at which time I used to sit at her side, learning verses which she would rehearse to me. I was placed here somewhat like Timothy with his grandmother Lois; for from what I myself recollect, and especially from the testimony of some pious Christians yet living, she was a very eminent character. She laboured much to give me a high veneration for the Supreme Being, in so much that, when I could read a little, I was struck with a kind of reverential dread at the words *Lord* or *God*, when I saw them in the Bible; but I could form no kind of notion what this Great Being could be. As I grew older, my wonder was so far gratified by my worthy instructor telling me that God was a spirit, and invisible, and that I could not speak, act, or even think, but he was acquainted with it all; and that he saw me at all times and in all places: but this I thought could hardly be true, as I imagined God could certainly not see me in the dark.

My grandfather being a very healthy and pious man, no weather would prevent him attending the church at Melrose, which was about a mile distant; but my grandmother being older, and not so robust in her constitution, was often detained at home in stormy weather, or during the winter season; but, though absent in body from the ordinances, she was present in spirit; and it is to be desired that all Christians would improve their time when necessarily detained at home from church as she did; for it was her custom to make family worship, I only being present, during the time of divine service; and it was the greatest possible wonder to me what pleasure she could have in it when my grandfather was absent, and I could take no active part in it, except making an attempt to follow the psalm as she was singing it. It was certainly however a great pleasure to her, though a real weariness to me; but although I could not then see what advantage I could receive from her praying to God to make me an object of his special care, she saw it; and I trust I have reaped much benefit from her prayers. Nor did she lose all the minister's labours, for there were two or three pious neighbours who used to meet upon the Sabbath evening, and talk over the substance of what they had heard, their "speech being with grace, seasoned with salt." My grandfather being a man of superior mental endowments, and having an excellent memory, I was quite astonished how they, and especially he, could remember so much, when, with all my attention, I could scarcely bring home one sentence of what had been preached. I was, however, very careful to learn my task, which was a psalm, or a part of one, and a few questions out of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism; and when I got through that book, I used to answer the whole questions on two Sabbath evenings, to keep them on my memory. In short, I remained under this friendly roof, having the great benefit of precept and example, attending school regularly, until I was eight years of age.

I was then, I may say, sent upon the wide world, in which I have ever since been a wanderer; for, when I came to Edinburgh, where my father and mother then lived, I went to a Mr. —, in the capacity of a tobacco spinner's boy, where I had of course to mix with many of those I would have chosen to avoid; but, being attentive to my work, my master soon began to take notice of me, and was wont to give me a penny more upon Saturday night than the rest, but this without their knowledge; and his kindness made me if any thing more diligent. I found myself more comfortable here than at first I expected, and I continued in this way until I was ten years of age, when I was hired to a Mrs. C. to wait at the table, run messages, &c. for which I received my meat, clothes, and one pound ten shillings in the half-year.

I was remarkably well situated in her service, partly through a very trifling circumstance, which was this: When out one day airing, she dropped her gold watch and some money, and I found them and gave them to her in a very cheerful manner, being happy to have it in my power to relieve her uneasy mind; and she took a liking to me, as she said, for my apparent honesty and attention. The first strong proof I had of her attachment was as follows: The housekeeper desired me to bring her a bottle of small beer, and it being somehow not to her mind, she abused me so as to make me cry plentifully; and before I could get myself properly composed, the bell rang, and I was obliged to go up stairs, and, notwithstanding my care not to be discovered, my mistress perceived me in rather a confused state of mind, and asked me the reason in a very kind manner. I was afraid to tell a lie, and her kind treatment emboldened me to acknowledge the truth. After due inquiry, finding the housekeeper in the wrong, and me in the right, she ordered her to get ready to leave the house, but with wages and board wages till the term. Her regard to me still increased, and I did all in my power to please her. In a few weeks after, she sent for my mother, and told her she intended to make a man of me, if we both lived, meaning to give me an education for a genteel business, and to put me in a way to do for myself. My parents were highly gratified with these proposals. But, alas! how uncertain are all human plans and prospects; "For who saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" The great leveller, who pours contempt upon princes, laid my kind benefactor, "with the hopes of the father that begat me, and of the mother who bare me, low in the dust;" and shall I say, in bitterness of soul, as Jacob did in another case, "that all these things are against me?" Very far be this expression from me; but I have no cause to doubt that, if Mrs. C. had thought herself so near leaving our world, she would have made some provision for me; for the day on which she died, perceiving the approach of the last enemy, she ordered the servant girl who was in the room to ring the bell for me; but her sister-in-law, understanding this, came out of the bed-room, and prevented me entering, saying, I was not wanted, and, as the girl afterwards told me, said to Mrs. C that I was not in the house. Mrs. C.'s brother-in-law got nearly all her money, houses, and moveables, and only gave me sixpence when I carried his portmanteau to the coach on his leaving Edinburgh. But I was not the only one that sustained a loss by her death; for many poor creatures, who had been her weekly pensioners, mourned their respective losses also. It was really mournful to see these, and her trades-people, and others who had been benefited by her, on the day she was interred, many of them with drooping heads and watery eyes, taking a view of the last remains of their charitable friend; and they had just cause, for even the woman who was her principal weekly pensioner, and had been her nurse, was struck off the list.

My time not being out, I served it out with Mrs. C.'s sister-in-law, and was then engaged with a Mr. B — , who had formerly been in better circumstances, but through some affliction had now lost his sight. My chief business was to go out with him when he wanted an airing; but in this family I experienced a great contrast from that of my valuable friend formerly mentioned, for in truth I was almost starved for want of victuals. It would not become me to tell about the shifts practised in the family, but I remember well being so pinched in my allowance, that I stood eagerly waiting for the potato pot coming off, that I might get the skins to eat, which I would devour with greediness. The servant girl fared no better than myself, and was unable to afford me any relief as she could not even give me a potato, they being all counted out to her. How much better would it have been for Mr. B — 's two daughters to have done the work of the house themselves, and saved the meat and wages of a servant maid, instead of appearing in public like ladies, when their circumstances were so indifferent! But they had seen better days; "they could not work, and to beg they were ashamed." So true is Solomon's remark, at present as well as in his own day, "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing."

About this time my worthy grandmother died, (of whom I cannot think without heartfelt emotion,) committing her soul "to Him in whom she believed;" and, as she was exemplary in her life, she was no less so in her death. Although I had not the satisfaction of seeing her on her death-bed, I have since learned some very comfortable particulars. Nothing else worth mentioning happened

while I was in this family, but one circumstance; which was this: I happened to get a few halfpence given me, with which I purchased an old fife, and this cheering companion beguiled many a hungry hour, for I was remarkably fond of music. This was not the first time I showed my attachment to music; for when I lived at Darnick with my grandfather, there was a weaver in the town, who was famous, far and near, as a whistler, and he used to gratify my musical desire by whistling a tune to me, till I had got it nearly correct, and then gave me another, and so on; but I was then little aware what this was to lead to, for I afterwards got enough of music, as you shall see in the sequel of this book; but it may be seen from this early propensity in me, that "even a child may be known by his doings."

After leaving this family, I went to a Mr. F. where also was a cousin of my own, who paid me great attention: but I looked upon her rather as an enemy than a friend; for I fell in with some bad companions, with whom I got a habit of staying and amusing myself, when I was sent a message, and in order to screen myself I was obliged to have recourse to falsehoods. – My cousin frequently expostulated with me, but all to no effect; at last my master, discovering my negligent and disobedient conduct, gave me a good drubbing, and this was a mean of bringing me to my senses; so I was compelled to give up all fellowship with my pitch-and-toss gentry, and I became afterwards more attentive. Nothing worth mentioning happened to me while I remained here, but the death of my grandfather, of an iliac passion, who, as I was named after him, distinguished me from the rest by leaving me his Bible as a legacy, wishing the blessing of God to accompany it.

I was now fourteen years of age, and went to learn the trade of a weaver in Darnick; and when you know that the great dearth of 1799, 1800, came on, and that I could only earn about fourteen pence a day, half of which went to my master, you will see that I had much occasion for the practice of that abstinence which I had been forced to learn at the B – School. It would be tedious and trifling to tell how I managed to make up my breakfast, dinner, and supper; I have been for months together, indeed, that I never could say my hunger was once satisfied, even though I had recourse to rather dishonest means to help me, for I went out at night, and would pull a turnip or two in the fields, when I thought "no eye could see me." But it is worthy of remark, that as far as I can judge, I never knew so much of what contentment was in all my life; I thought hardly any body so well off as myself, for I got into such a rigid system of living, that, through long habit, it became quite natural to me, though I must say that I was often so weak, as hardly to be able to get off and on my loom.

Notwithstanding my very straitened circumstances, I found ways and means, upon the winter Sabbath evenings, to spare a halfpenny for a candle, that I might be able to read Mr. Boston's *Fourfold State*, to which I had taken a great liking. I delighted particularly to read and meditate on the *Fourth State*, where the happiness of saints in a future world is described; and the expression, "they shall hunger no more," had in it an emphasis (though I fear somewhat of a carnal kind) that put more joy into my heart than worldly men can have when their corn and wine are increased.

During the time I was thus exposed to many hardships, there is one thing I must not omit, which is as follows: – I was rather worse off, both for money and provisions, than I had been for a long time. – No meal was to be had in Darnick, and I went to Melrose on Monday morning for a supply; but the scarcity was so great that I could find none. On Tuesday, after working all the morning, I again went to Melrose, though I was scarcely able to reach it, through weakness, and succeeded in getting a quarter stone at one shilling and fourpence; and all the money I had in the world, after paying this, was twopence. When I was on my way home, walking along the Tweed, I took many a wishful look at my scanty store of meal in the corner of my bag; and taking the twopence out of my pocket, I said to myself, "This is all the money and meal I have to support me till I get my web finished, and the price returned from Edinburgh;" but, to my utter astonishment, I pulled out a shilling along with it. The joy of seeing the shilling, and the unaccountable way of its coming there, filled me alternately with pleasure and pain, but, after recovering from my ecstasy a little, it occurred to my mind, that I must have got it from the miller, through some oversight, in returning me my last twopence in the change for the meal. I resolved, therefore, to go back and return the man his shilling, hungry and

weariness as I was: but a sinful thought struck me that this might be the hand of Divine Providence, in giving me that mite out of the miller's abundance, to supply my present wants; but I stood and argued with myself long before I could persuade myself to go home and make my supper, of which I stood in much need. In so doing, I acted wrong, and still more so in afterwards thinking that Providence had given a blessing with that shilling, merely because I have never wanted one since – my hardships, I may say, being henceforth at a close.

Shortly after this, the Earlston Volunteers wanted an additional fifer; and as I was still labouring to improve myself, from the time I got the old fife, formerly mentioned, my name reached the ears of the commanding officer, who sent for me, and, with permission of my master, I went every Wednesday afternoon to Earlston, which was about five miles distant, and received each time, one shilling and sixpence for my trouble. My long habit of living meanly, and this addition weekly, made me, as I thought, quite a gentleman, and I saw none that I would have changed conditions with, every thing considered.

After I left Darnick, I went to a Mr. W – , near Dalkeith, and wrought journeyman with him for one summer, during which time, I attended church at Dalkeith; and I well recollect, that on my way home, having a mile or two of a retired road to go, my mind would frequently be so full of the minister's sermon, and such like topics, that I used to take off my hat and walk bareheaded, as I thought the seriousness of the subject called for that mark of respect, especially as my meditations were mixed with ejaculatory prayer.

I left Mr. W – after the bleaching work was over for the summer, and went in search of work to Peebles, which, being the place of my nativity, I had a great desire to see. This was, I think, in the year 1802. On my arrival at Peebles I was very fortunate, or rather the Lord made my way prosperous, for I got a good master and comfortable lodgings the very first day. My master was serjeant-major of the volunteers, and being much pleased with my fife playing, he persuaded me to join that corps as a fifer. But soon after the Army of Reserve was raised, and I was obliged, either to pay money into societies, to insure me against it, or run the risk of going for nothing, neither of which I liked. The bounties given to substitutes were very good, and, my excessive regard for music still increasing, I resolved on taking the bounty; but then what excuse to give to my parents I did not well know, for I thought it would vex them much, as I had a brother already in the artillery: so I resolved to say that it was the expense necessary for insuring me, that forced me to go into the army; but in truth it was neither that, nor yet the temptation of the large bounty that made me enlist, but the prospect of being a fifer in the army, where I could get proper instructions in my favourite music. Having made up my mind to this, I offered myself as a substitute for a Mr. G. and received as bounty two and twenty pounds. The report that I had enlisted in the Army of Reserve quickly went over the town, though few believed it, as I was always so attentive to my work, and I had just finished forty-five yards of linen for shirts to myself; but although the news seemed strange to many, it was no more strange than true. So I gave all my best clothes and the web, except as much as made me three shirts, to my mother; and as I did not go to the army from necessity, but choice, I left the whole of my bounty in the hands of a respectable man in Peebles. Along with other recruits, I was marched to Edinburgh, and from thence to Linlithgow, at which place inquiry was made if there was any lad in our party who could play the fife; and the fife-major hearing of me, he asked if I was willing to play on that instrument? I said I had no objection, (for it was indeed the very thing I wanted, as you will easily believe,) provided I was exempted from that disagreeable part of their duty, viz. flogging the men; so he went to the commanding officer, and got that matter settled to my satisfaction. Shortly after this we received a route for Ireland, and marched on the 5th December. We had snow, rain, or hail every day of our march, which was a fortnight; but this did not discourage me, for such hardships I had expected, and laid my account with in my new way of life.

CHAPTER II

We arrived at Belfast, and lay there about six months, nothing extraordinary taking place; only I was truly happy and thankful in having been excused from the disagreeable duty of punishing the men. The very sight of this, for some time, made me ready to faint, until its frequency rendered it easier to my mind. From Belfast we were marched to Athlone, the centre of Ireland, by severe marches. This was in June, 1804. At this place I was appointed leading fifer to the grenadier company of the regiment. We had not been six weeks at Athlone, when an order was issued for forming an army on the plains of Kildare, and our regiment, (the 26th, or Scots Cameronians,) was among the number that assembled at the formation of this camp. When all collected, there were three regiments of horse, sixteen of foot, and a brigade of light infantry, the whole under the command of Lord Cathcart. Here, truly, I began to *peel my wands*, or, to speak more plainly, to know something of the inconveniences of a soldier's life.

The country being in a very troubled state, we were ordered to encamp on the Curragh, to be ready if wanted, and also to inure us to the hardships of the field. As I said before, I belonged to the grenadiers, and there were twenty of us in a small bell tent; and you may easier conceive than I can describe how such a number could take repose during the night on so small a space, with nothing but straw on the ground, and our camp blankets. We were so jammed together that it was impossible for any one to change his posture, at least without disturbing the whole tent. Our field-days also were very frequent and severe, the men being out from five or six o'clock in the morning until four or five in the afternoon, without tasting a morsel of victuals, so that many of the men fainted daily in the ranks from want and fatigue.

After remaining on the Curragh for six weeks, the country became quiet, and we were ordered back to our old stations; and heartily glad we were again to see the barracks of Athlone. After doing the duty here a few months longer, we received a route to Dublin, at which news I was very greatly delighted, for there I expected to get my musical mind much better entertained than at Athlone. On my arrival at Dublin I went to a music teacher, to whom I paid half-a-guinea a month for getting instructions on the violin and clarionet; but having already acquired considerable execution on the German flute, I was encouraged myself to give instructions on that instrument; and the money I received in this way enabled me to defray the expense of my own teacher, and of buying instruments, music, &c. Here I breathed my native air, I may say; for what with regimental practice, teaching my pupils, attending my own instructions, writing my own music, &c. I certainly had enough of it, yet hardly could I ever say I was satiated. Even in the night the music was passing before me in review; and when I did not perfectly comprehend my master's lessons during the day, they were sure to be cleared up to me when I awoke during the night. There was no time here allowed for the service of God; no – something of more importance, as I thought, engrossed my mind, but I little thought that this course was preparing me apace for falling a victim before a temptation which was not far distant. It may seem strange to my readers, that I who seemed to show so much piety, during my apprenticeship, and for some time afterwards, should now live so careless a life; but I had my lashes of conscience sometimes, I assure you, and endeavoured to hush its clamours by saying, I had no opportunity in a barrack-room for prayer, reading my Bible, or serious reflection, and I tried to believe that God would take this for an excuse, particularly as I promised to become a good Christian, when the Lord should deliver me from this confusion. Truly, the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. The truth is, my mind was constantly going after its vanities; I found pleasure in nothing but music and musicians.

Windham's plan, as it was called, now came into action. This was for Militia and Army of Reserve men, to volunteer into the line for seven years, and great numbers in our regiment were taking the bounty every day. There was nothing but drumming and fifeing to be heard in the very passages of the barracks, and our commanding officer gave five pounds to drink, night after night, at the mess-

house, in order to encourage our men to extend¹ their service, and enter into the first battalion of the regiment, which consisted of what are called regulars; and to add to the intoxicating effect of the liquor, the whole corps of fifes and drums were ordered to attend, and continued there nightly, till we were all worn out with fatigue. In spite of these temptations, I never once thought of volunteering, though the commanding officer laboured hard to induce me to go with him into the first battalion. I told him freely that my mind did not lead me to the army; and when he saw he could not prevail, he said, "Very well, my man, if your heart does not lie in the right bit, never volunteer." But, alas! the value of the Apostle's admonition, "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall," was soon after exemplified in my experience. Shortly after this, upwards of one hundred of our men volunteered into the 2d battalion of the Scots Royals, which was also a marching regiment. Some of them were asked by Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart if there was any young man of the 26th corps of fifes, that was qualified for fife-major. They all answered, there was one B – . The Colonel hearing so much of me, sent a Serjeant to request me to call upon him. This I promised to do next day, but I had truly a miserable conflict in my mind that night, considering whether I ought to accept or refuse this offer. Sleep I could get none, but walked about the passages of the barracks all night, looking anxiously at both sides of the question. My principal objection was the wickedness of the army, for I easily got over that of the hardships to which I would be exposed in a marching regiment, either in the field or in a foreign country. On the other hand, if I could obtain the situation of serjeant and fife-major, the pay would be very comfortable, and I would have an opportunity of seeing the world, which would gratify an inclination I had long entertained. I therefore came to the resolution of going, if I received the above situation. To be short, I went to Colonel Stewart, and after a few words passing on both sides, he asked me if I would take the ten guineas of bounty, and fife-major, with the *rank* of serjeant, and go with him into the 2d Battalion of the Royals. I told him, if I received the *pay*, with the rank of serjeant and fife-major, I would, but not otherwise, for that I did not care for the rank without the pay. – So he was honest enough to tell me, that he did not know if the Duke of Kent would allow a fife-major the pay of serjeant, besides his perquisites as fife-major, but if I would take his offer, he would give me five guineas over and above my bounty, as he had received a good character of me, and liked my appearance, and, moreover, that I would find a friend in him, and that he would write the Duke of Kent, who was our Colonel, for authority to give me the serjeant's pay; but as he could not assure me of its being done, he would promise nothing but what he could perform. This was very honest plain dealing, and was truly attractive in my eyes, but it would not do: so I thanked him for his friendly offers, and so bade him farewell, and walked away; but he followed me to the foot of the stair, where the major of the regiment meeting us, said, "Well Stewart, have you agreed with this young man?" He answered in the negative, and stated to him the reason as above mentioned; but the major soon removed that obstacle, by saying, "we can easily give him the difference of pay out of the fund of the regiment, if the duke will not allow it; and to give me all satisfaction that the serjeant's pay would be sure to me from that date, he offered me his letter to that effect." To this proposal I could no longer object, and in short I received the letter, passed the Doctor, got my bounty, and a furlough of two months to see my friends in Scotland, before I returned to my barracks. A few days after, along with other volunteers, who had also obtained furloughs, we sailed in a vessel for Saltcoats, and, after a very pleasant passage of two days, were safely landed there, and my comrades each took his own road. One young lad only went with me to Edinburgh; and we were on the top of the coach on the 7th day of August, 1806; that dreadful day of thunder, lightning, and rain, by which so much mischief was done to men, beasts, and the fruits of the earth. We were the only outside passengers, and the company inside were willing to incommode themselves considerably, to give us shelter, which was kind on their part, and tempting upon ours; and my comrade gave me the motion to that effect; but I refused, saying, that as we had joined a marching regiment of the line, we must lay our account

¹ The Reserve were enlisted for five years, or during the war, and were not obliged to go out of the three kingdoms.

with being exposed frequently to such weather and worse, and that I could not brook this sort of effeminateness, but no doubt we got a very complete ducking.

I arrived safe at Peebles amongst my old friends, where I was warmly received after an absence of three years; but I did not long remain there till I formed an intimacy with a young woman; and our courtship, like that of many soldiers, was not long; but I would not marry till I returned to the regiment and obtained my Colonel's liberty, that so I might have a better chance of getting her abroad with me, should the regiment, as we expected, be ordered on foreign service. My attachment to this young woman was very sincere; and I gave instructions to the person with whom I had left my bounty money, as formerly mentioned, to give her ten pounds to bear her expenses to the regiment, then in England, when, after obtaining the Colonel's leave to marry her, I should send him a letter to that effect. All being thus settled between us, the time drew nigh when I was to leave my native spot, which was now doubly dear to me. I left Peebles about two o'clock in the morning, in fine moonlight, in the month of September; but it is easier for you, my dear reader, to conceive than for me to describe my situation. I cast many a longing lingering look behind me, and dragged myself by main force out of the view. I was little short of being angry at my preciseness, that I did not marry off hand, and bring the girl with me, whose situation was still more pitiable than my own. We were only two days in Edinburgh, then sailed from Leith Roads for the regiment, which was lying at Horsham, and I was not long there when I had all settled in our favour, and immediately wrote for the young woman; but, as I afterwards discovered, or at least had great reason to suspect, a certain evil-designing person kept up the letters. I waited in anxious suspense for "the girl I left behind me," but I waited in vain. Days were as months, and brought me no relief. At last, to crown my misery, I received a letter from a friend in Peebles, who knew of our agreement, stating, that Jean had almost gone out of her mind about me, and thinking, like too many of my coat, that I was going to prove unfaithful, she went to Edinburgh to inquire about me. There she got no relief to her distracted mind, but only the satisfaction that I had sailed for the regiment at such and such a time. She was now put to her wits end, and in a kind of derangement she wandered to Dumfries, where she had a brother residing, and remained with him for some time. She saw herself like a castaway, for she was ashamed to go back to her place at Peebles, and it being between terms, she could not get into service in a country where she was a stranger: so, in a word, the serjeant of a Highland regiment, an acquaintance of her brother's, paid his addresses to her, and she married him; but scarcely was the festival over when the contents of my letter, through the same channel probably by which it was intercepted originally, reached her ears; and if she was to be pitied before that time, she was not less so then. This was, I may say, my first courtship, (and I then thought it would be my last,) for, during the three years I was in Ireland, I never spent an hour in a woman's company, good or bad, although some of my companions often tried to lead me astray. But I was always so much taken up with my music, that I had no time to spend in such courses: Providence by this means preserving me from at least a worse evil; for these strange women (as Solomon calls them) were the occasion of hundreds of the regiment getting themselves confined and flogged, besides the other dreadful effects produced by their company.

Nothing extraordinary happened till we came to Hastings, which we left on the 15th March, 1807, (on our route to Portsmouth to be embarked for India,) and reached Lewes on that day, where I, and thirty others of our regiment, were billeted at the White Hart. Shoreham is the next stage for soldiers, and here, intending to write my friends in Scotland, I felt for my watch, (which cast up the day of the month,) that I might put the right date to my letter, but, to my great mortification, my watch was gone. After a little reflection, I remembered that I had, very stupidly indeed, left it in my quarters at Lewes: so I immediately went to Colonel Stewart to ask his permission to return there, which he readily granted. I left Shoreham about four o'clock at night, and reached the inn at Lewes about eleven. Happy was I to find my watch safe in the possession of Boots, and I immediately took the road again, and was in Shoreham in good time to march with the regiment in the morning. When Colonel Stewart saw me, he inquired why I had not gone for my watch; and when I told him I had

already been at Lewes, he would scarcely believe me, until I showed her to him. He then desired me to get on one of the baggage waggons; but I said I was able enough for the march; but you may believe I was terribly tired before we reached the next stage.

When we arrived at Portsmouth, the Duke of Kent came in person to make arrangements for the embarkation of the regiment; but now came the tug of war for the married people. There were between two and three hundred women in the 2d Battalion of the Royals, and there were only six women for every hundred men permitted to go; so that sixty women (our battalion being 1000 strong) were the whole number who could embark with their husbands. The selection of these was made by casting lots. Amongst the married people, all was suspense and anxiety to know their destiny; and you may conceive what barrack-rooms we had after it was over. I went into one of them, as I was passing to the Colonel's quarters, to see one of my musical friends, who had a worthy woman to his wife, and to inquire if she had got a prize, but all was *dool* and sorrow. I thought with myself that I would try what my interest with the Colonel could do for this sorrowful couple, but durst not speak my mind lest I should raise hopes that would never be realized, and thus make things worse; for "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." So I opened my mind freely to the Colonel, and spoke much in favour of Mrs. Allan, (for that was her name,) but nothing more than she justly deserved. His answer to me was, "Indeed B – I wish the Duke of Kent had stopped where he was. We would have managed matters better without him; but I will try what I can do for her on your account. Tell Mrs. Allan to come to me." So I left him quite overjoyed that I should have it in my power to bring comfort to the disconsolate mourners. I returned to his quarters immediately along with Mrs. Allan. The Colonel said, smiling, "Well, Mrs. Allan, are you not afraid of your husband being jealous of you and the Fife Major?" She answered in the negative. "He speaks in very high terms of your character." "I am very much obliged to him, Sir, for his good opinion." "Is he any relation to you?" "No, Sir, but he has always been a very good friend." "That is right; give my compliments to Captain Glover, and desire him from me to put down your name to go with his company." – Take notice of this circumstance, for I will have occasion to mention it again.

CHAPTER III

We were embarked on board of our respective ships on the 13th April, 1807, and weighed anchor on the 18th. There seems much to make one unhappy and melancholy, when taking probably the last view of the land which gave him birth; but, notwithstanding, all seemed now festivity and joy. Some of those who seemed so full of joy, I have good reason to believe, might, with justice, be called Solomon's merry men – in their laughter their hearts were sad. Still more, perhaps, have their relations who loved them cause of sorrow. To them may the prophet's language be truly directed, "Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him, but weep sore for him that goeth away, for he shall return no more, nor see his native country; but he shall die in the place where they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more."

At sea, Ship Coutts, May 1st. William Troop departed this life. He was one of those unhappy creatures who left his wife behind, and died of a broken heart. They had been lately married, and were like the "loving hind and the pleasant roe," and his feelings being unable to stand the separating stroke, he sunk under this insurmountable load of sorrow.

May 6, Twelve o'clock noon. We had a tremendous storm of wind, accompanied with incessant falls of rain and vivid flashes of lightning. All hands during night were piped by the boatswain upon deck, to reef, or rather to clue the sails, when a fine looking young man, who had shipped himself at Portsmouth for ship's painter, being ordered aloft by the boatswain, to bear a hand in reefing the mizzen topsail, fell from the yard into the sea and was drowned. He pled hard with the boatswain to allow him to remain and assist upon deck, saying, that he never was aloft in his life, and that in such a dreadful night he was sure he would not be able to keep his feet; but all his entreaties were in vain.

June 12. This day we crossed the equinoctial line. The foolish but amusing ceremony (to bystanders) of shaving took place on all those who had not before crossed it; but, lest it might lead to any disturbance, the soldiers were exempted. The form is as follows: A person goes to the head of the ship, in the garb of Neptune, the god of the sea, according to the heathens, and another person, generally the most dexterous at the harpoon, kills a fish previously to this, and gives it to the Captain to be in readiness. Neptune, from the bow of the vessel, hails it in these words, "*What ship, a hoy?*" The officer whose turn it is to be on watch, answers "*Coutts,*" or whatever is the name. "*Where bound?*" *Officer on watch.* – "*India.*" Neptune then comes on board and enters his triumphal car, which stands in waiting. He is drawn aft by the sailors, and the fish is presented to him by the captain. Then commences the shaving operation. All the sailors who have not formerly crossed the equinoctial are kept below blindfolded until the large tub is ready. Each of them is in this state led upon deck, and placed on a plank laid across the tub, filled with salt water. The mock barber daubs his face all over with tar and feathers.

For a razor he takes a piece of iron hoop and commences his shaving. It requires no common degree of patience to endure this horrid operation; but if the person gets refractory, he is instantly plunged over head and ears in the watery element, by one of the sailors pulling the plank from under him; and after he has scrambled out of the tub, should he stand to expostulate with his comrades on this treatment, two or three of the sailors, each provided with a bucket of salt water, standing on the hammock railings, discharge the contents upon him with such an overwhelming dash as makes him glad to choose another time and place to avenge his wrongs.

June 20. I lost my watch overboard, which cost me upwards of four pounds, and so much uneasiness and travel in England; but I would not have mentioned the circumstance but for the loss of a seal attached to it, which I had received from my affectionate comrade the drum-major of the 2d battalion, who was sent to another battalion, and we got in his place an old wicked creature, whom I may have occasion to bring on the carpet again. We were much attached to each other, and he offered to his Royal Highness to go with me to India in the capacity of a private drummer, if he would not

continue him in his present situation; but his petition was not granted, so he gave me this seal as a token of his remembrance.

June 22.— We have seen a great many flying fish lately. This is truly a wonderful curiosity in nature, and is well calculated to excite our admiration and sympathy. These poor persecuted creatures are about the size of a herring, with finny wings, (as they may be called,) resembling in size and shape the blade of a table knife. When pursued by the dolphin, they rise out of the water by the assistance of these wings, and are able to fly as long as they keep moist; they then dip and rise again, until they are quite exhausted, and if they do not gain upon the dolphin, which is not easy, on account of his amazing swiftness in swimming, they become his prey. When out of the water, they seem to be deprived of the use of their eyes, which I suppose was the cause of some of them flying on board of our ship. I one day picked up one, and roasted it upon the gelly fire, and found it to have very much the flavour of a good herring. They always go in shoals; and it is really very novel and beautiful, to see scores, or I may say hundreds of these winged tenants of the great deep, skimming the water like so many swallows.

June 30. James Moor fell overboard when in the act of shaking a rug for one of the officers. He kept himself above water a considerable time, but before the boat which was lowered for his assistance could reach him, he sunk like lead in the mighty waters. The sea was running so high that it was with no small difficulty the boat and crew could reach the ship again.

July 17. We saw the Cape of Good Hope on our larboard bow, but we were at too great a distance to distinguish any objects on land. Signals were hoisted by the —, 50 gun ship, for the captains, or rather pursers, to give an account of the state of their respective ships with regard to water. Being in general pretty well supplied, except the Coutts, which was head quarter ship, and had upwards of five hundred men on board, the commander of the man-of-war would not put into the Cape for her sake alone. Our expectations of seeing this country were therefore disappointed; but that was nothing: dearly did we pay for the want of this great blessing, with which we could here have been supplied. In about a month after we were put on short allowance, which in these latitudes is an English quart a-day; this we thought very hard, and it was so in some respects; but it would have been well if this allowance had been continued, but from a quart we were speedily reduced to a pint; and in this parched condition were we kept till we reached the land, which was three weeks.

The reader may be inclined to think that this was no great hardship; but I hope you will not take it amiss, if I say that this shows your entire ignorance of the matter. Only consider for a moment, and you will, I am persuaded, come to a very different conclusion. Take for your dinner a salt herring, or a piece of beef that has been perhaps a twelvemonth in the brine, in a very hot summer day, having ate no breakfast beforehand, and try if you would find an English pint of water sufficient even for the afternoon; but what is a single day when the body is full of moisture? Continue this experiment for three weeks or a month, and I am fully satisfied you will change your tone. — Let me tell you, my dear reader, that I never knew the meaning of that passage of the Psalmist, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," before that time; but after lying in my hammock, in the hallop deck, a few hours, (sleeping it could never be called,) amongst two hundred men and upwards, without, I may say, one breath of air, and when the heat was such as to melt the sealing wax I had in my chest — I say, after a person had remained in that state, and in such a place for a few hours, it was hardly possible to articulate a word. You will allow we must have been ill indeed before we could have chosen to be without any victuals cooked for us an entire fortnight. But this was literally the case in the mess to which I belonged. Some of these miserable creatures were so carried away by their intolerable thirst, as to draw up the salt water, in a tin pot, each anxiously waiting his turn to swallow the nauseous draught. This to be sure was making things worse. The consequence of all this was, we had at one time one hundred and thirty-two men on the doctor's list, with sea-scurvy and sores. You will think it strange that we could live at all after so long wanting victuals. I answer, we had a certain quantity of biscuit served out to us, all the colours of the rainbow; and I am sure the pint of water, which we

had every day at twelve o'clock, would, from taste and smell, have turned the stomach of any person who had never known any thing of this extremity. A person possessed of the best eyes in the ship could not see to the bottom of a tea-cup full of it, had he got it to himself for his trouble, which would have been the greatest reward that could have been offered to him. You may think I am going to say too much, but I say it with a clear conscience, that in this state of torment I would have cheerfully suffered the *pain* of drowning, (but not to be drowned outright, mind ye,) for a bellyful of water; and often, in my troubled slumbers, did I imagine myself plunging and struggling in the waters of the Tweed, and I "dreamed, that behold I was drinking, but when I awoke, behold I was faint, and my soul had appetite." My dear reader, I pray to God that you may never experience this extremity, for the pain of hunger, which I have often felt, was pleasure itself compared with these sufferings.

CHAPTER IV

During this voyage, which was five months to a day, we observed land twice at a great distance, viz. the Cape of Good Hope, and the Island of Sumatra: we had six men died, and two fell over board. But the land which we so eagerly desired appeared upon our starboard bow upon the 13th of September, 1807. This island was formerly called Punang, but the modern name is, Prince of Wales' Island, and is situated at the straits of Malacca. The land has a very fine appearance when tolerably near, having a gentle declivity toward the sea, and mantled over with wood. But it was the water which we longed for, and the hope of which raised our spirits more than the view of the truly welcome scenery which we were approaching.

We remained on board of our respective ships until the 18th, when all were ordered ashore; the sick men (at least those who were very bad) to the general hospital, and the effective to the barracks. But we sent more men to the general hospital than all the rest of the fleet, which proves the bad consequences produced by scarcity of water; for all the rest of the ships had three times our quantity, exclusive of their having pease soup twice a week, which we were deprived of, from the want of water. We had to march about three miles before we came to the barracks, at the back of which there was a small rivulet; and you may easily suppose that we were no sooner dismissed from the ranks, than it was who to be first there, to enjoy once more the unspeakable luxury of fresh water. But this had none of the best effects, for the water being impregnated with the juice of the different kinds of sweet fruits that fell from the trees of the plantation through which it flowed, and our long abstinence, contributed not a little to bring on a severe flux, which cut off the men in great numbers. Our accommodation here was indeed very indifferent, and not at all what we expected from the idea of India which we had formed to ourselves, from what we were accustomed to hear when at home.

The barracks were very temporary, being entirely made from the cocoa-nut tree, and were divided into five rooms, or rather houses, clear from end to end, and containing each about one hundred and eighty men. The walls, or rather sides of these houses, were made by stakes driven into the ground, and were about nine feet high, and these stakes covered over with cocoa-nut leaves, spitted like candlewicks, and tied in horizontal rows, one over another from top to bottom. The roof was formed nearly as it is in this country, and covered with the same materials as the sides. And when it came to blow hard, which it frequently did, and these leaves gave way to the blast, the barracks had the appearance of waving corn in harvest. Our beds also were as temporary as our barracks, being also stakes driven into the ground, and spaked over from end to end like a horse's hack for holding hay, without any bedding whatever, even for the sick in the regimental hospital! It was therefore a happy thing for the men that brought their hammock and blanket ashore, for those who sold them to the bum-boats (that came along-side with fruit) were obliged to lie with their body clothes, upon these knotty bamboo spakes, which made them any thing but a comfortable place for repose.

We knew a great difference also of our provisions from what we had been accustomed to at home; for we were served out with buffalo beef, on which there was not to be seen a shred of fat; and rice was our substitute for bread. This was very well for the natives, who knew nothing else; but for men accustomed to the rich and substantial food of Europe, and particularly after the stomach had lost all relish by a wasting dysentery, it was very sorry fare, and made us incline to adopt the sentiments of the Israelites, and to long for the flesh pots of that land we had left.

We were a very few days here when the flux appeared amongst the men, and made very rapid progress. I also took this trouble, which increased upon me to a very great degree. I acknowledge myself to have acted a very imprudent part, in not reporting myself to the doctor sooner; but I was at last compelled to put my name into the sick list, when I was well told of my error; and as I was found to be in a dangerous condition, I was sent to the general hospital, where all the worst of our men were; for the medical officers there were better acquainted with the nature of this disease, and the

accommodation was also much better for the men. The manner in which the sick are conveyed in this country, is as follows: – The person is put into what is called a doolie, which is nearly in the form of one of the small houses or boxes used in Scotland for watch-dogs, being about six feet long, and three deep. In the middle of each side there is a door to go out and in by, and upon the top, at each end, there is a strong ring, through which a pole is put, and borne by four natives. I was therefore laid in one of these doolies, and carried about half way, when the bearers stopt. I conjectured that they were resting a little, as it was three miles between the barrack and the hospital; but I was rather surprised when one of them demanded some money from me. I told him that I had nothing for him; but that I would give him something when they carried me to the hospital. This did not at all satisfy him; and the other bearers also became clamorous, and I began to fear they intended me a mischief, – for they might have done what they chose with me, as I was unable to make any resistance, being both feeble and unarmed; but I got them to proceed, by giving signs to them that they should be rewarded for their trouble afterward. But I never heard a word about money when they set me down; and if I had reported them to the general doctor, they would have been paid for their trouble with a witness: but as they made off when I left the doolie, I said nothing about it.

When I entered the hospital, and looked around me to view the place, and saw the meagre and distressed features of the men stretched upon the beds, and many of the cots empty, as if death had been robbing the place of its inhabitants, to replenish the narrow house appointed for all living, something awfully solemn stole upon my mind, which I could by no means shake off, and which I am altogether unable to describe. I had not remained here many days when I thought my disorder was taking a turn for the better; but I was deceived in this, because it was only some temporary relief I was receiving from the medicine, for it returned upon me worse than ever. Here I had wearisome nights appointed to me, for in that season I was generally worst. The ward in which I lay was very large, and had a truly dismal appearance at night, being lighted by two or three glimmering lamps, while all around was solemn and still, save the cries and groans of the sufferers, that seemed to contend along the echoing walls; and night after night we were visited by the king of terrors, to many, I am afraid, in his awfulest form. There were no less than six of his darts struck the next cot to that on which I lay.

You may think that my state in these circumstances was truly deplorable, and you think rightly, for so it was; but I have not told you the worst, for "the spirit of a man may sustain his infirmity," and my spirit was not easily subdued by affliction, but "a wounded spirit who can bear?" and "The arrows of the Almighty were within me, the poison whereof drunk up my spirits," for here I had time for serious reflection, or rather here it was forced upon me. Here I could not mix with jolly companions to drive away melancholy, and my favourite music could give me no relief. Here too I was compelled to listen to the voice of conscience, and O! how loudly did it expostulate with me about the answers I formerly gave it in Ireland, namely, that I had no opportunity in the confusion of a barrack-room for reading my Bible, meditation, or prayer, but that I would become a good Christian when I was out of the army. Here I was indeed out of the confusion of a barrack-room, but not only still in the army, but far, far from any minister of Christ to give me wholesome counsel. O what would I have given for the company of a godly minister, or pious, well-informed Christian! but, alas! "I looked upon the right hand, but none would know me; refuge failed me, no man cared for my soul." Surely the Lord frequently answers the prayers of his people by "terrible things in righteousness." Here, "in the multitude of my thoughts within me," I could entertain little hope of ever coming out of this place again, far less of getting out of the army, where I might have an opportunity of serving God; for death seemed to be making rapid strides towards me, to take me down to the "bars of the pit." But death seemed rather a relief from my agonizing trouble, had it not been that I knew that "after death there was a judgment." And how was my soul to appear before the holy and just Judge of the earth? This was a question I could not answer. I looked with anxious care to see if any hope was to be entertained from my past life, but, alas! all seemed to be a dreary waste. Some comfort, indeed, I had from the view of my apprenticeship, and some time afterward, which I formerly mentioned; but, alas! even

then I saw myself to have been guilty of many a sin, and all the rest of my life appeared to be but one act of disobedience and rebellion; and I saw myself condemned by the laws of heaven, supposing I had lived all my life in the apparently innocent manner above stated; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." I next looked to the general mercy of God, but neither could that give me any relief; and in this state of torment I remained for several nights and days with little intermission. At last it pleased the Lord to send me relief in the following manner: —

One forenoon, when I was almost distracted with the agony of my soul, and the pain of my body, that blessed passage was given me, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me:" and never before did I feel any thing come home with such divine power and such healing comfort to my afflicted soul. I tried to recollect if ever I had read it in my Bible, or heard it any time, but in vain; yet I was fully persuaded that it was the voice of God speaking in his word, and accompanied by his Holy Spirit. I will not attempt a description of my mind at this time, for it is impossible, because it was indeed "a joy unspeakable." O what a flood of comfort did it impart to my helpless soul! for then I believed that God "had not in anger shut up his tender mercy, but still intended to be gracious." Now "the Lord made my bed in my sickness," for my couch, as I thought, became softer, and every thing around me wore a different aspect. I yet looked back with pleasure to the description of heaven given by Mr. Boston in his *Fourfold State*, (which I used to read when in Darnick,) and still hoped to be an inhabitant of that happy place. Here the Lord turned for me "my mourning into dancing, he put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;" — here the Lord dealt with me as he did with his ancient church, for "he allured me, and brought me into the wilderness, that he might speak comfortably unto me;" — and here "he made me to sing, as in the days of my youth." "Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness: For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." My dear reader, if you are a stranger to the comfortable sense of the favour of God, you may think this is strange kind of language; and no wonder, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;" but believe me, this was true solid comfort, arising from a view which I had just obtained of a reconciled God in Christ, although I acknowledge myself to have had at this time a very imperfect knowledge of the gospel-scheme of salvation.

Yet the Lord, who generally works by rational means, left not his work half done, for he sent me an instructor in the following manner: — The next day there was a young man, who sailed out with me in the same ship, came and sat down upon my bed-side. He had been in the hospital for some time, but I had never seen him, nor even known that he was in the place, because he was in a different ward. I had even a very slight acquaintance of him as a fellow-soldier, and none at all of his being an eminent Christian. As I said, he sat down upon my bed-side, and asked very kindly how I was. My heart warmed to him while he uttered the words, though I cannot tell for what, but I formed somehow a favourable opinion of him, and was free enough to tell him how matters stood. I began by informing him how my mind had been exercised since I came to the hospital, nearly in the way above related, as I wished to hear his mind upon the subject, lest I should be deceiving myself. He asked me, if I read my Bible. I said, that I had sometimes read it when I could see, but could derive very little comfort from it, as I could not understand it; and now my sight was so far gone as to be unable to read it, but I would take it kind if he would read a portion of it for me, — which he readily agreed to. But, oh! the rays of light that darted into my mind while he read, and "opened to me the Scriptures!" I then spoke to him of my former wicked, unprofitable life. He said, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin." I then said, the only comfort I could derive from the many years I had lived, was when a very young boy, as I have formerly stated; but I saw that although I had lived all my life in this comparatively harmless way I was condemned; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them." He answered,

"That whatever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God;" but that "Christ Jesus had redeemed us from the curse of the law, by being made a curse for them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" and moreover, "it was not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." After some conversation of this kind, we took leave of each other, he promising soon to come back and see me. I need hardly tell you how we frequently "took sweet counsel together," while he remained in the hospital; but his complaint getting better, he was ordered to his duty, which truly I was very sorry for. But by God's kindness in sending me this instructor, I was put into the way that leads to everlasting life; and my mind being led into "wisdom's ways, which are pleasantness and peace," my body began gradually to recover.

The flux, however, still continuing, and keeping me in a state of extreme weakness, I was advised by one of my fifers to take a dose of corks and wine without the doctor's knowledge, since all his medicine hitherto appeared ineffectual for stopping the flow of blood. I was rather averse to this prescription, which was a pint of wine, made as warm as I could possibly drink it, and a burnt cork reduced to a powder and mixed with it, and this dose I was to take for three nights; and, to encourage me, he said some of our former regiment were cured by it when we were in Ireland. I accordingly took this horse medicine with great difficulty; and you may easily imagine that it could not be otherwise, considering that I had eaten nothing for about a fortnight; and more particularly, that my mouth was perfectly raw with the mercury which is given in obstinate cases of this disease, and the cork stuck in my throat, so that it was hardly possible for me to get it over; however, I got it managed for the three nights; but never would I advise a friend of mine to try such an experiment, for the pain of the flux was never so severe as that produced by this savage dose. After being a few days in this extreme pain, the flux of blood disappeared, and I got gradually better, but I have never enjoyed my former health; and, I believe, stopping the blood so suddenly was permanently unfavourable to my constitution.

I must not omit informing you, that my good friend the Colonel, with whom I enlisted in Dublin, used to pay me a visit frequently; and finding me in better health and spirits than formerly, he told the doctor to let me want for nothing which could be of service to me. The doctor then inquired very particularly into my case. I told him the blood had left me, and that my mouth was rather better. He ordered me a pint of wine every day, and a bit of fowl for dinner. In a word, by the blessing of God, I got a good deal better, and left the hospital upon the 9th November; but I had not been at my duty many days, when an order came for seven companies to go to Madras, by a frigate and two country ships, which were ready for us in the bay. We embarked upon the 25th November, the staff and light company went on board of *La Dedaigieuse*, a frigate formerly taken from the French; and the rest of the regiment (except two companies left at the island) went on board of the two country ships. We had a very rough passage, having high winds, swelling seas, and a leaky ship; and being exposed to the weather, as we took our watch upon deck in turns, I was again seized with a severe flux. The Colonel, seeing me one day on deck, inquired very kindly how I was? I told him the truth; and he was very angry that I should expose myself in such weather, especially after my late severe illness. I made the best apology I could, but he was not satisfied, and desired me to go to the surgeon and let my case be known. He likewise asked me what liquor I received? I told him half a pint of arrack daily; but I said that I did not think that it was agreeing with me. So he spoke to the doctor, who ordered me a pint of wine in place of it, and to keep myself constantly below. The frigate, as I have stated above, was very leaky; and having to encounter a dreadful hurricane during four nights and days, it was with difficulty that the crew, with the assistance of the soldiers, could keep her afloat. We were three weeks upon this passage without any deaths, except one man who fell overboard; but it was indeed a very disagreeable voyage, for we could not keep our provisions from getting wet by the sea rushing in between every plank! You may think it strange that one of his Majesty's ships of war was suffered to be in this leaky condition; but it would have taken a very tight vessel indeed to have

ridden this storm without making a considerable quantity of water; and, moreover, she was ordered for dock as soon as she reached the harbour.

The manner of landing persons on this coast may not be unworthy of the reader's attention. The best boats belonging to his Majesty's navy dare not venture through the prodigious surf that runs every where on the beach, and you may often see the captains of the Indiamen or Men-of-war, obliged to leave their elegant boats and fine-dressed crews outside the surf, and get on board of what are called Massulah boats, to be rowed ashore by natives. These boats are constructed nearly like our own, but are considerably deeper. The planks are sewed together by small cocoa-nut ropes, instead of being nailed, and they are caulked by the cocoa-nut hemp (if I may call it so) of which the ropes are made.

When the passengers are all seated, the boatmen begin their rowing, which they accompany with a kind of song, until they approach the breakers, when the boatswain gives the alarm, and all is activity among the rowers; for if they did not pay great attention to avoid the wave in the act of breaking, the boat would run every risk of being swamped. The most severe part of the boat's usage is when she strikes the beach the first time, which generally tumbles the passengers upon one another like a heap. The boatmen must not attempt to jump out and pull her ashore after the first breaker, for the wave that makes her strike runs past a considerable distance, and then returns, rushing down the declivity of the beach with irresistible force, carrying her along with it; but before the next wave overtakes them the boat has gained a little by rowing, so that the second shock is less formidable; and, on the third, they jump out in a moment, and lay hold on a rope fastened to the bow on purpose, and thereby hold her fast till the passengers get ashore. Were our boats to get such usage it would knock them to staves.

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